

Editorial

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Editorial

This special issue contains refereed papers whose content is based on presentations at the biennial scientific meeting of the International Society for Plasmid Biology (ISPB), which was held in Clare College, Cambridge, UK from September 18-23, 2016. The meeting was attended by over 160 plasmid biologists from 19 different countries. Clare College was Jim Watson's college when he was in Cambridge and it was inspiring to see the model of the DNA double helix when walking back from breakfast in the old part of College every morning. The meeting included sessions on all aspects of plasmids and other mobile genetic elements: genomics, diversity, evolution and ecology as well as replication, stable inheritance, conjugative transfer and physiology. Many of these topics are covered by papers that have been selected for publication in this special issue.

Highlights of the meeting were the Plenary Lectures given by: Kenn Gerdes (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) on how his early studies on plasmid stability have led to an understanding of bacterial stress survival; and ISPB President Dhruba Chattoraj (NIH, Bethesda, USA) on how plasmid-like chromosomes are constrained to replicate just once per cell cycle. The meeting was completed with a magical dinner in the Dining Hall of Gonville and Caius College, Francis Crick's former college and where David Summers is a Fellow. The weather was excellent throughout the week and attendees enjoyed punting on "The Backs" as well as having a pub dinner in The Eagle.

The next International Society for Plasmid Biology meeting will be held at University of Washington, Seattle in the USA from 5th – 10th August 2018. Further details will be available in due course from <http://www.plasmidbiologysociety.org/>

Special Issue Editors

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